

THE PORTAGE SENTINEL.

JAMES W. BOMERVILLE, PROPRIETOR.

Office, at south end of PHOENIX BLOCK.

THE PORTAGE SENTINEL is published every

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at the following rates:

One copy, one year, in advance, \$1.00

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Twenty copies, one year, in advance, \$20.00

The money must always accompany orders

at the club rates.

THE HENRY, HENRY SLEIGH.

BY LEON C. W. PATTER, U. S. ARMY.

Jingle, jingle, clear the way,

'Tis the merry, merry sleigh;

As it swiftly comes along,

Now the sleigh bells are ringing;

See the gleam of happy light,

Flashing o'er the pathway white;

Jingle, jingle—how it whistles,

Jingle, jingle—how it whistles,

Crowded full of happy girls.

Jingle, jingle—fast it flies,

Shooting shafts from roguish eyes;

Carols, carols I'll be bound,

Little heedings who they sound;

See them with capacious pranks,

Ploughing now the drifted banks,

Jingle, jingle—mid the glees,

Who among them cares for me?

Jingle, jingle—on they flow,

Capas and bonnets white with snow,

And the faces swimming past—

Nodding through the fleecy blast;

Not a single robe they fold

To protect them from the cold,

Jingle, jingle—mid the storm,

Fun and frolic keep them warm.

Jingle, jingle—down the hills,

O'er the meadows, past the mills,

Now 'tis slow, now 'tis fast,

Winter will not always last;

Every pleasure has its time,

Spring will come and stop the chime.

Jingle, jingle—clear the way,

'Tis the merry, merry sleigh.

The Prayer of Augusta Ross.

A STORY FOR THE TIMES.

BY VIRGINIA F. TOWNSEND.

"I can't make up my mind what to do in

this matter," murmured to herself Mrs. Au-

gusta Ross as she dipped a dozen silver spoons

into a china bowl of water, the top of which

was thickly scattered with flakes of snow.

This was a domestic service which Mrs.

Ross was not in the habit of performing, and

I am not quite certain that the lady would

not have been slightly disconcerted if any of

her fashionable up-town friends had called

and found her washing her own silver; but

the cook was ill that morning, the errand girl

had some orders to leave at the grocery's,

the chambermaid had been compelled to invade

the cook's province, and, as Mrs. Warren Ross

kept only three servants for her family of two,

she had slipped the rings from her fair fin-

gers and condescended to wash and wipe the

breakfast china and silver that morning.

She was a pretty and graceful woman as

she stood there in her morning gown of green

cashmere, but the smooth young forehead

wore a shadow of anxiety and trouble as she

communed with herself.

"I see plainly enough that Warren's in real

trouble with his business, and I know that he

feels as though he couldn't afford so expensive

an establishment as this."

"I've got so that I dread to hand him a bill,

and this morning when I asked him for the

money for my new cloak and bonnet the look

in his eyes fairly startled me."

"And to think, too, that I'd made economy

a special point in the matter, and the two

cost me only forty dollars."

"I'm so worried and troubled that I'm half

resolved to go to him and say, 'We'll just

break up here and go off into the country and

hire a pretty little cottage somewhere, and

keep only one girl, and live as economically

as we possibly can till these dreadful times

are over."

"But this would be such a dreadful coming-

down, and then what would sister Sara say!

The Portage Sentinel.

"THE UNION—IT MUST AND SHALL BE PRESERVED."

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whom the young girl had resided till her marriage, for her parents left no fortune to their daughters.

Mrs. Sara Yelton was a worldly, ambitious woman, the whole end of whose life was to make all the display she could, and to rise in that class of society which represented her world, and these low and sordid aims had eaten slowly and rusted out, as they inevitably must, all that was fair and lovely in the heart of the woman, and made her narrow, cold and selfish.

It was unfortunate for Augusta Ross that the years which were most likely to mould and give tone to her life were passed under the influence of such a woman. She was impulsive and susceptible, and the warmth and brightness of her nature made her a great favorite with those who knew her. Mrs. Yelton was proud of her pretty and graceful sister, and had very ambitious views regarding Augusta's future.

These had not been entirely gratified in the young girl's marriage; for, although Warren Ross came of an old and good family, the young man had no fortune, and nothing to depend on but the salary he received in the bank where he was clerk, and occupied a position of high trust.

Augusta's marriage had met with some opposition from her sister, but, though the former was naturally too flexible and yielding, her affections had in one instance made her strong and resolute, and Sara saw that her opposition would be fruitless, and that she must give up her dream of seeing her sister the mistress of a mansion on Fifth Avenue.

Warren Ross had an unblemished name. He was a young man of most winning address, intelligent and fine looking. Mrs. Yelton concluded to make the best of Augusta's choice, and superintended all their arrangements for housekeeping.

The young clerk was very fond and very proud of his wife, and when Mrs. Yelton represented to her brother-in-law that her sister's position demanded a style of living which his salary of twenty-five hundred dollars utterly prohibited, the proud and happy husband had not the courage to set his face against it.

It is true he hinted the necessity for economy very strongly, but Mrs. Yelton always received these remarks in a way which wounded his sensitive pride, and, as her husband had offered to "foot half the bills" for furnishing the house, which Mrs. Yelton had selected at a thousand dollars rent, Warren Ross concluded to let her have her own way, and Augusta's pride had been stimulated in the matter, as a young wife's would very naturally be, and she had acquiesced in her sister's arrangements.

And so the happy young pair had gone to housekeeping and continued it for two years, and Warren's salary of twenty-five hundred had only met half the debts which he had incurred each year of his marriage. These debts had pressed heavier and heavier upon the young husband, and the watchful and loving eyes of his wife had seen the new cars in his face and suspected the cause; for he could not bring himself to tell her, and there was no possibility of retrenching largely in their style of living, unless they gave up their house and commenced on an entirely different plan.

And Warren Ross lacked the courage to explain to his wife the real state of affairs, to ask her to give up her sister and her society, leave the city, with its attractions, and go off into the country, and settle down in some pleasant cottage there.

"Poor child! it would kill her!" said the mistaken man to himself. But this could not go on always. As the times grew more stringent his creditors grew more pressing, and Warren Ross looked on all sides for light and help, and could find none.

Mrs. Ross had just placed away the last piece of china when her sister called. She found the lady in the parlor in costly furs and velvet, and she soon announced the object of her visit. It was high time that Augusta should give a party, averred the elder sister. She had not done so for the last year, and was indebted to a host of friends, for Mrs. Yelton still exercised considerable supervision over Augusta's affairs.

"O, Sara, I can't think of it for a moment," broke out Mrs. Ross with an energy that was greatly intensified by her previous reflections. "The truth is I suspect Warren's in a great deal of trouble, and that he's dreadfully pressed to meet our expenses, and I've been seriously thinking"—determined now she had started to come out with the whole truth—"of breaking up here and going off and settling down in some pretty little country place and living in a style we can afford."

"I hope, Augusta Ross," and the lady bridled her head with indignation, "you'll have some regard for your family, before you disgrace yourself in that fashion. Go off and bury yourself in the country, and live in a cottage, and do your own work! I didn't suppose when you married Warren Ross that he'd ever sink you to that! certain that these words would strike a very vulnerable point."

The fair cheeks of Augusta Ross flushed vividly, but she stood her ground.

"Well, whether I live with him in a cottage or not, I wouldn't exchange Warren Ross for the richest man in the world this day."

"Well, carry your romance as far as you like, only when you go and bury yourself in the country I hope that I may be spared the mortification of meeting any of our mutual friends, and explaining to them how far you have fallen," and the lady looked at her watch and discovered that she had only time to get down to Steward's to fulfill an engagement with a friend whom she had promised to meet there, and the conversation was abruptly terminated, although Mrs. Yelton promised to herself to resume it next day, for Augusta's manner had somewhat alarmed her.

"But I'll prevent this matter," murmured the lady as she got into her carriage. "The very idea! Men are always tormenting their wives over their business."

Mrs. Ross did not go out that day, and her husband and his affairs were constantly uppermost in her mind.

But her sister's words had influenced her, and at last brought her to that state in which she could say to herself, "After all, perhaps I've thought too much of it, and Warren will get out of this trouble as other men do. It would come very strange and hard to live in the country, and our circumstances may not require the sacrifice."

"Then Sara would feel the disgrace so keenly, and think Warren was nobody, and people would talk so. I'll dismiss the thought for the present." And, walking up and down the room as she made this determination, the skirt of Mrs. Ross's dress brushed past something. It was the morning paper which had fallen from the chair where it had hastily been placed.

She stooped to raise it, and as she did so her eyes lighted on a brief account of the trial of a young bank clerk who had proved a defaulter to a considerable amount, and been sentenced to five years in the State's prison. He had occupied a position of high trust in the bank, had hitherto borne an unblemished reputation, had a wife and two children, and his indulgence in a style of living greatly beyond his means was assigned as the cause which led to the commission of his crime. A chill crept through the heart of Mrs. Ross as she read, which fairly amounted to terror when she laid down the paper.

"What if this were Warren?" she thought to herself, and her excited imagination, following on the path of her thoughts, pictured vividly all the misery and agony which the commission of such a crime must bring down on the heads of both. How did she know but, stung to desperation, her noble husband might be tempted beyond his strength and fall!

She did not spurn the suggestion, as her pride would have done at another time. She only felt the remorse, the fruitless self-reproach which must crush out her own life if her husband should fall.

"O, God," prayed the lips of Augusta Ross, "save my husband, and I will do all my duty." And in that very hour she resolved that the stern lesson which she had read and the prayer she had uttered should be taken into her heart and bring forth its fruit abundantly.

Warren Ross happened to have in his possession the keys which opened the bank vault that afternoon, for he had been ordered to extract a considerable sum that day, and in the afternoon he was left alone for an hour, and in that hour Satan entered into the heart of Warren Ross.

He glanced at the heavy iron doors, he shook the keys in his hand, he remembered that there was no mortal eye to see him, and that a handful of gold from that vault would never be missed, and that it would relieve him of the great burden which had been crushing down his life.

He could look his creditors once more in the face, he could breathe free again, and he should not be compelled to witness the pain and mortification of Augusta when the true state of his affairs was made known to her.

The dread that his household furniture might be attached, and which had been haunting him for two months past, could now be removed.

"I'm sorry to do this thing," mused Warren Ross. "I wouldn't have believed two days ago that anything could have induced me to harbor the thought a moment; but what a man to with a wife whom he loves better than he does his own life, and whom he'd rather die than hear reproach him with poverty and disgrace that he had brought upon her."

"I wouldn't do it for my own sake, but there's Augusta, and then I don't intend to steal this money, on my honor I don't, and I'll enter into some speculation and repay every dollar of it with interest somehow, and when a man's in the tight place that I am he's driven to desperation, and the end must justify the means. I'm safe enough, for even if they should miss so small an amount they'd never think I took it; and even then the man felt a glow of pride as he thought that in all the ten years during which he had been in that bank his memory did not hold one deed which could kindle a blush in his cheek."

Warren Ross was very pale as he glanced all around the room, and his limbs shook as he moved toward the door of the vault. The key was in the lock and then—had the prayer of his wife reached the ear which is never heavy that it can not hear the cry of the children of men?—the man's heart failed him. The great sin which he was about to commit stood clear before him; the key did not turn in the lock.

"O, I can not, I can not do this to-night!" groaned the white lips of Warren Ross. "I will go home to my wife once more an innocent man. Some other time, perhaps, but not to-night—not to-night," and he hurried trembling away as though he dared not trust himself to remain in the way of temptation.

"O, Warren, my dear, dear husband, I am so glad you are come, I have so wanted to see you!"

Augusta Ross met her husband at the sitting room door that night, and her fair, soft arms were about his neck, and her soft, sweet lips close to his cheek.

"What did you want me so for, darling?" taking her up in his arms with a thought which he could not tell at his heart.

"O, because I've been laying out a plan to-day." And then in her warm, impulsive fashion Augusta Ross told her husband that she wanted to break up housekeeping in the city and go off and settle down in some dainty bit of a cottage in the country, and reduce their expenses to a thousand a year.

"It would be better for the health of both," she insisted, "and they would be as happy as two bees in clover."